

Amendments to the Specification:

Please add the following new paragraph after the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 22, which starts with "A double jawed pincer type staple remover":

U.S. Pat. No. 5,195,724 issued on Mar. 23, 1993 to Koo, U.S. Pat. No. 5,657,965 issued on Aug. 19, 1997 to Aria, and U.S. Pat. No. 6,772,996 issued on Aug. 10, 2004 to Carlston et al. all describe staple removing devices with similar staple removing principles, the double jawed pincer type staple remover described above. Staple removers using this principle have the disadvantage of requiring high amount of manual force from the fingers to operate. These types of staple removers also have the disadvantage of in inadequate support to the substrate. Due to the high and difficult to control forces required from the fingers, and from the many moving parts moving in contact with the substrate, the paper is frequently damaged during the staple removing operation.

Please add the following new paragraph after the new paragraph above:

U.S. Pat. No. 5,605,320 issued on Feb. 25, 1997 to Crawford describes a staple remover having a first member with two spaced apart prongs inserted under the staple crossbar, and a second member pivotally connected to the first member, and a nose member. The nose member, upon relative movement between the first and second member, deforms the staple to allow the staple legs to be withdrawn substantially from the substrate. This type of staple remover also suffers from inadequate support to the substrate. The substrate is frequently dented and damaged by the nose member when the said nose member moves below the two spaced apart prongs and into the substrate. At the same time, the substrate near the staple legs is also damaged due to inadequate support, because the two spaced apart prongs are lifted from the substrate to naturally oppose the nose member as it presses into the substrate.

Please add the following new paragraph after the new paragraph above:

U.S. Pat. No. 5,996,969 issued in Dec. 7, 1999 to Johnston et al, describes a staple remover including a clamping mechanism that secures one staple leg to the remover, enabling extracting of that leg. The staple is removed by prying and lifting, similar to the pry-type remover described above. The prying action naturally produces a gap between the staple and substrate, and therefore also suffers from the disadvantage of inadequate support to fragile substrates such as paper.

Please add the following new paragraph after the new paragraph above:

U.S. Pat. No. 5,653,424 issued on Aug. 5, 1997 to Khan, describes a staple remover with a tongue-like tapered blade and a slidable claw member. The blade is slidably inserted under the staple arm causing the staple to unclench. A slidable claw member is used to push the staple into a storage compartment. This staple remover requires the remover to slide a relatively long distance until the wider end of the tapered tongue unclenches the staple.

Please replace the paragraph originally at page 1, line 35, which starts with “Thus it is desirable to have” with the following amended paragraph:

Thus it is desirable to have a staple removing device that does not require excessive force to operate, minimises damage to the substrate, and doesn't require sliding the remover long distances.

Please replace the paragraph originally at page 2, line 2, which starts with “In accordance with the present invention” with the following amended paragraph:

In accordance with the present invention, an improved staple remover comprising:
a base member having a front end, a rear end, and a first section near the front end;
a lever member having a front end, a rear end, and a first section near the front end, the said first section of the lever member is pivotally attached to the first section of the said base member;
a tongue;
means of lifting the staple from the substrate using the leverage from the lever member pivotally attached to the base member, where the said lifting means does not extend below the baseline of the said base member during the staple removing operation;
means of supporting and continuing to support the substrate throughout the staple removing operation with the said base member, is provided.

Please replace the paragraph originally at page 4, line 33, which starts with “The base member 1 presses against substrate” with the following amended paragraph”

The base member 1 presses against substrate at the point where the staple 10 is stapled into the substrate, thus providing support and enabling utilization of the mechanical leverage advantage from the lever member 2 pivotally attached to the base member 1. The support provided by the base member 1 allows the leverage operation to be performed on pliable and flexible substrates such as sheets of paper, and minimizes damage to the substrate. ~~To minimize movement of the base member 1 against the substrate during the lever member lifting operation, a gripping material such as rubber can be attached to the underside of the said base member.~~

Please add the following new paragraph after the amended paragraph above:

During the staple removing operation, the user presses the rear end of base member 1 against the substrate. Throughout the staple removing operation, the base member 1 maintains contact and support of the substrate. This is because user only need to apply a downwards force on the base member 1 against the substrate, which is stabilized by the surface under the substrate; a destabilizing lifting force on the base member is not required; also, the large surface area of base member 1 in contact with the substrate increases the support to the substrate; finally, pressing down on the rear end of base member 1 utilizes leverage due the length of base member 1, reducing the amount of force required to stabilize the said base member 1.

Please add the following new paragraph after the amended paragraph above:

The net forces will only result in the base member 1 moving in a direction parallel to the substrate. During this parallel movement, the base member 1 maintains contact with the substrate at all times; therefore it maintains support of the substrate. The parallel movement of the base member is desirable because it continues to wedge the tongue 3 further under the staple crossbar 11, until the upward force of the teeth 4 on the staple crossbar 11 removes the staple from the substrate.

Please add the following new paragraph after the amended paragraph above:

During the staple removing operation, the tip 7 of teeth 4 will travel in a circular path when the user lifts the lever member, without going below the baseline of base member 1. Therefore, the tip 7 will be closest to the substrate at a point directly below the pivot pin 5. This means the tip 7 would normally only be able to engage the staple 10 when the staple is directly under the pivot pin 5. However, because the tongue 3 is wedged under the staple crossbar 11, it raises the staple crossbar 11 into the circular path of the tip 7 some distance away from the point directly below the pivot pin 5. FIG 4. illustrates how the tip 7 of teeth 4 is able to engage under the raised staple crossbar 11 at a point some distance away from the point directly below the pivot pin 5.